

# STRENGTHENING FAMILY-PHYSICIAN COMMUNICATION: STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE RESIDENT EMPATHY IN THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH FAMILIES



# INTRODUCTIONS

- Rosibell Arcia-Diaz, MD, John H. Stroger Hospital of Cook County
- Michelle Barnes, MD, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Linda Gilkerson, PhD, Erikson Institute, Fussy Baby Network
- Miriam Dreifuss, MD, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Stacy Laurent, DO, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Amanda Osta, MD, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Jasmine Saavedra, DO, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Alisa Seo-Lee, MD, John H. Stroger Hospital of Cook County



# WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN YOUR PROGRAM?

- Program Director
- Associate Program Director
- Coordinator
- Chief Resident/Rising Chief Resident
- Other medical educator
- Resident

# OBJECTIVES

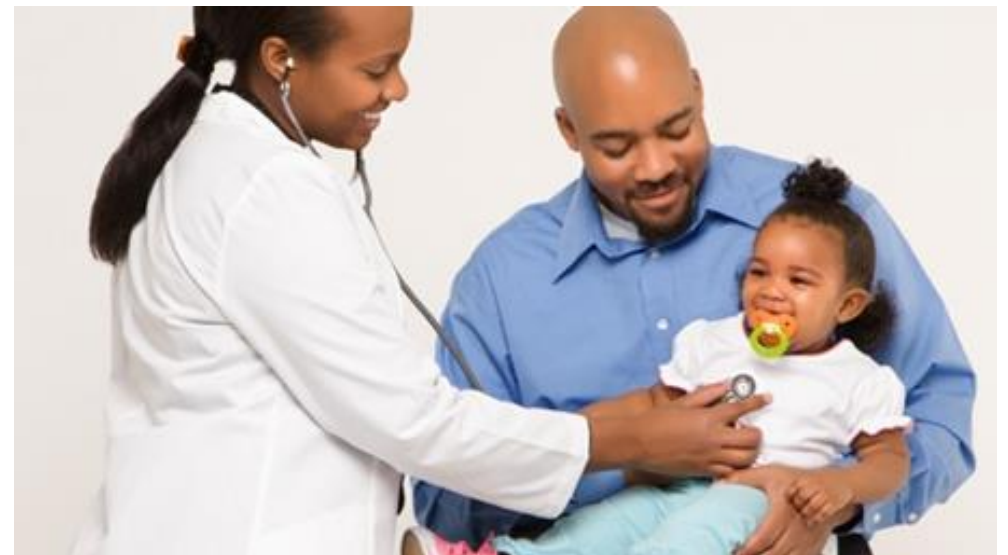
- Understand the importance of attunement in empathic communication with families
- Develop strategies for self-regulation to utilize in stressful communication scenarios
- Explore empathic communication and its effect on family-centered communication
- Contrast listening strategies and evaluate the impact of each on family-centered communication
- Consider how to integrate family-centered communication training into your training curriculum

# FAN FAMILY COMMUNICATION TOOL

- Read parent's communication cues
- Understand the optimal time to offer emotional support, ask questions, or give information
- Support parent/child communication
- Organize patient encounters efficiently to understand and address parent's concern
- Develop self-awareness and physician wellness strategies to help manage challenging interactions
- Communicate empathically and efficiently in clinical encounters

# RESIDENT COMMUNICATION TRAINING

- Train residents in the use of FAN Family Communication Tool
- Residents use FAN Family Communication Tool in clinical encounters
- Reflective supervision
- Integration into overall pediatric curriculum





“When you do something that doesn’t work, you have an opportunity to learn something and grow closer.”

T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. April, 2014

# FAN AS A TOOL FOR ATTUNEMENT

“When someone feels truly understood, ‘known,’ the attunement that occurs creates a space where it is possible to try new ways of interacting,” Siegel & Hartzell, 2003 in Lewis, 2011, p. 446.

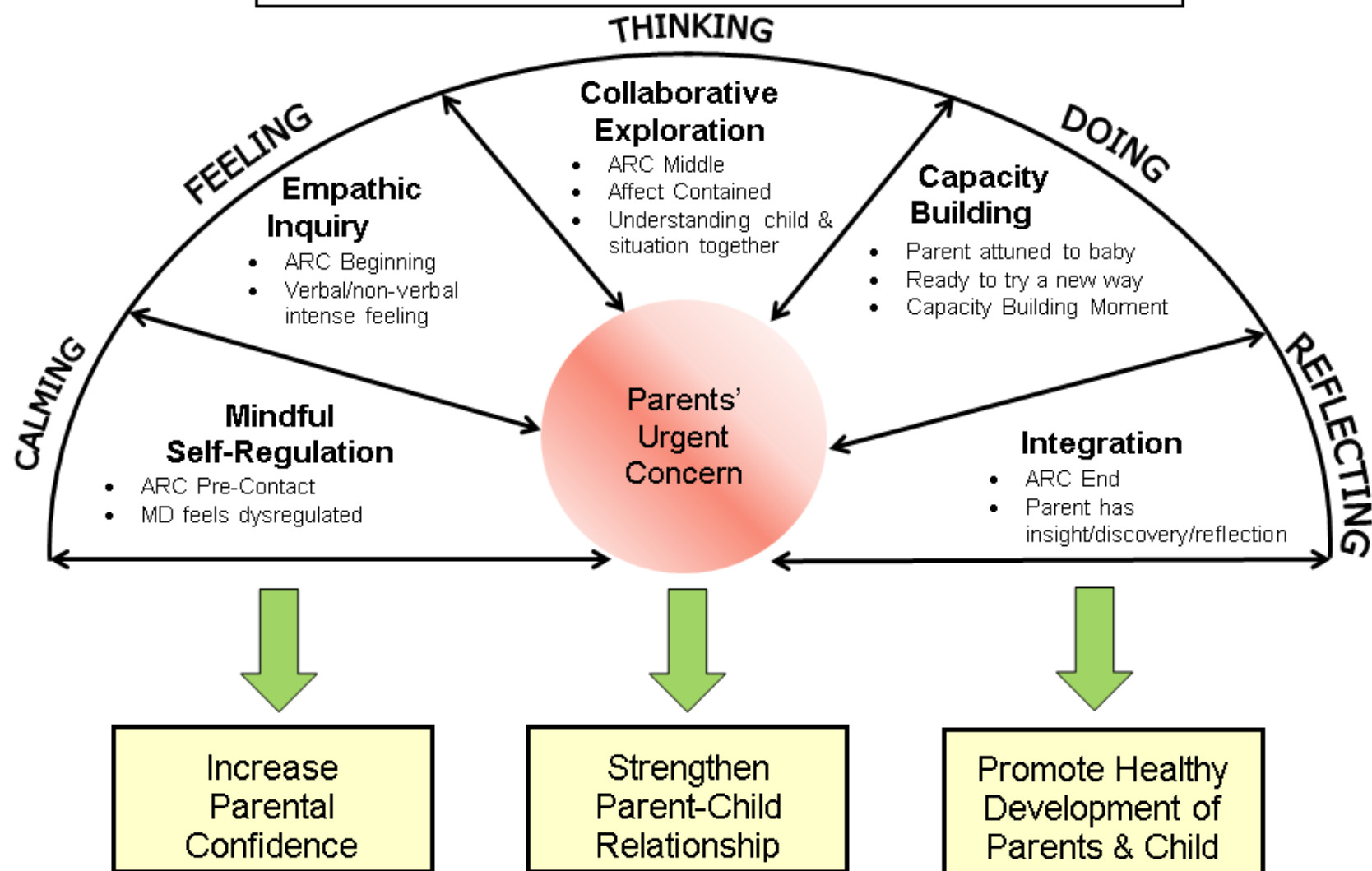
- Worries of a parent:
  - Is my baby all right?
  - Am I a good enough parent?



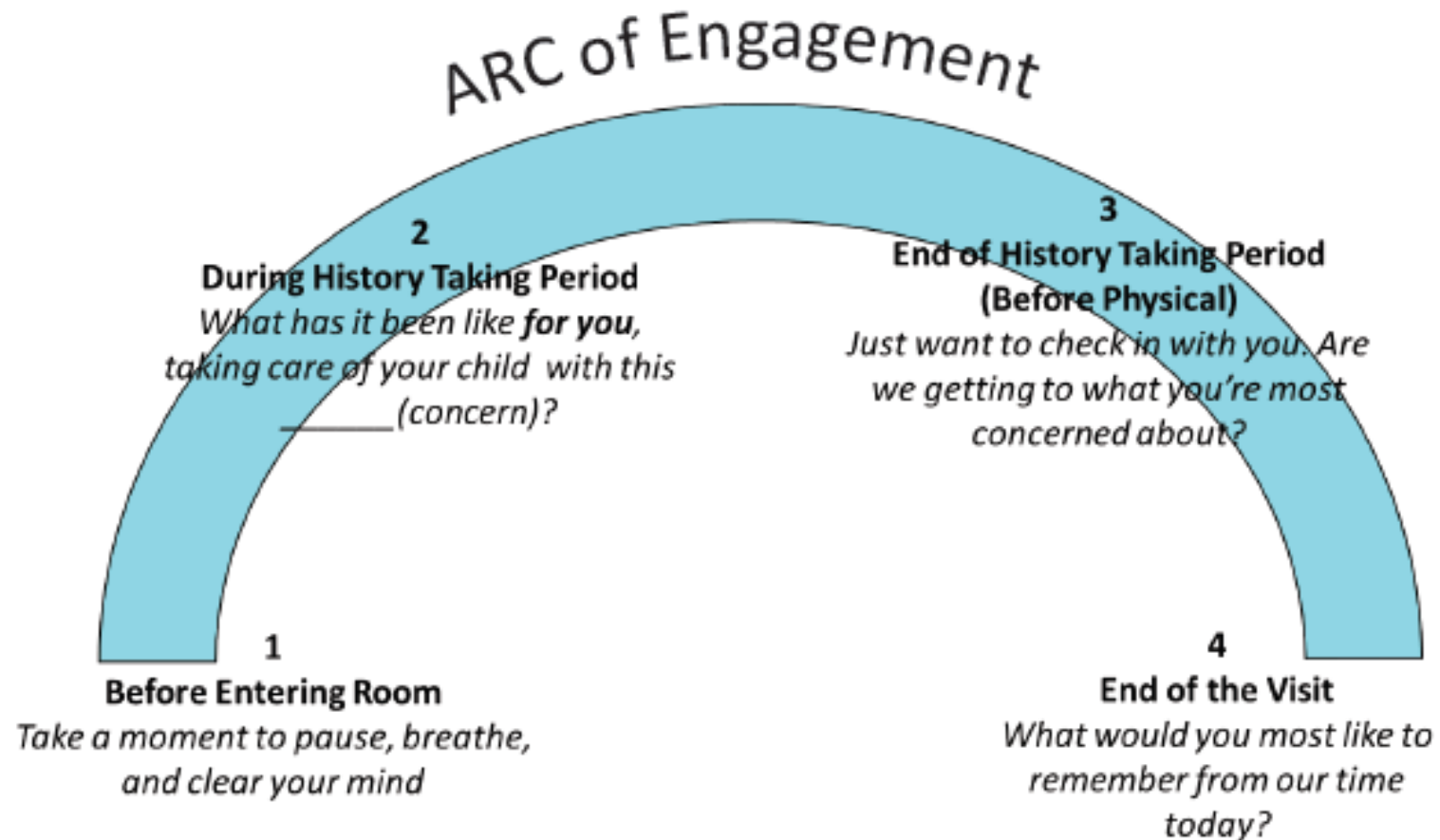


# FAN Communication Tool

Facilitating Attuned Interactions



# ARC OF ENGAGEMENT



# FAN IN PRACTICE



# Mindful self regulation: CALMING



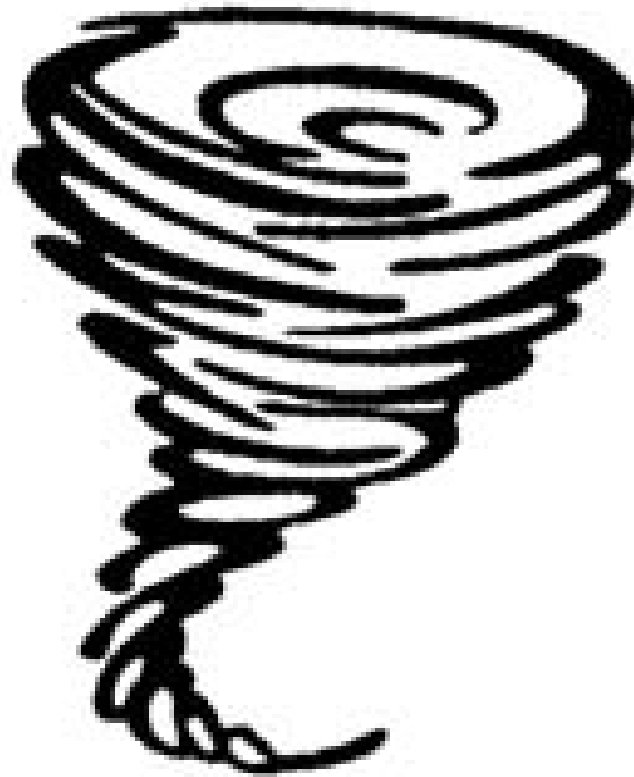
**Creating, Sustaining, Regaining a  
Calm and Engaged Presence**

**Resident Reflection:**

**“This process has made me aware of  
emotions that can come up during a  
visit, and I feel more prepared for  
them.”**

# Mindful self regulation: CALMING

*What gets you "stirred up"?*



# Mindful self regulation: CALMING

*How to do you feel when you are in balance vs. out of balance?*

- Body Sensations
- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Behaviors or Expressive Actions

*What are some strategies you use to stay regulated in stressful communication scenarios?*

# Mindful Self Regulation: Strategies

## Breathing



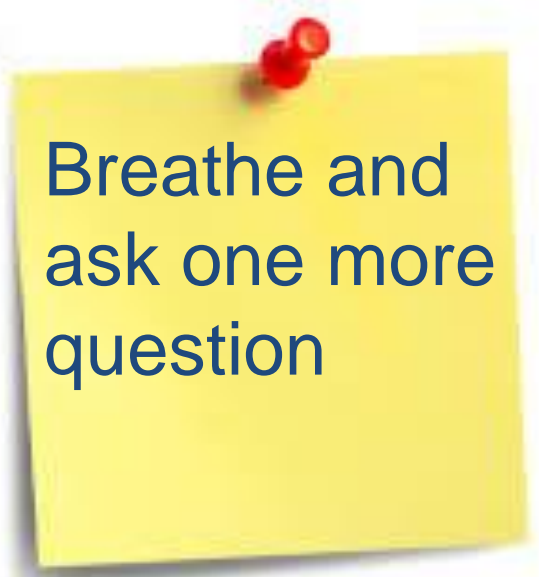
## Grounding





# Mindful Self Regulation: Strategies

## Self-Talk



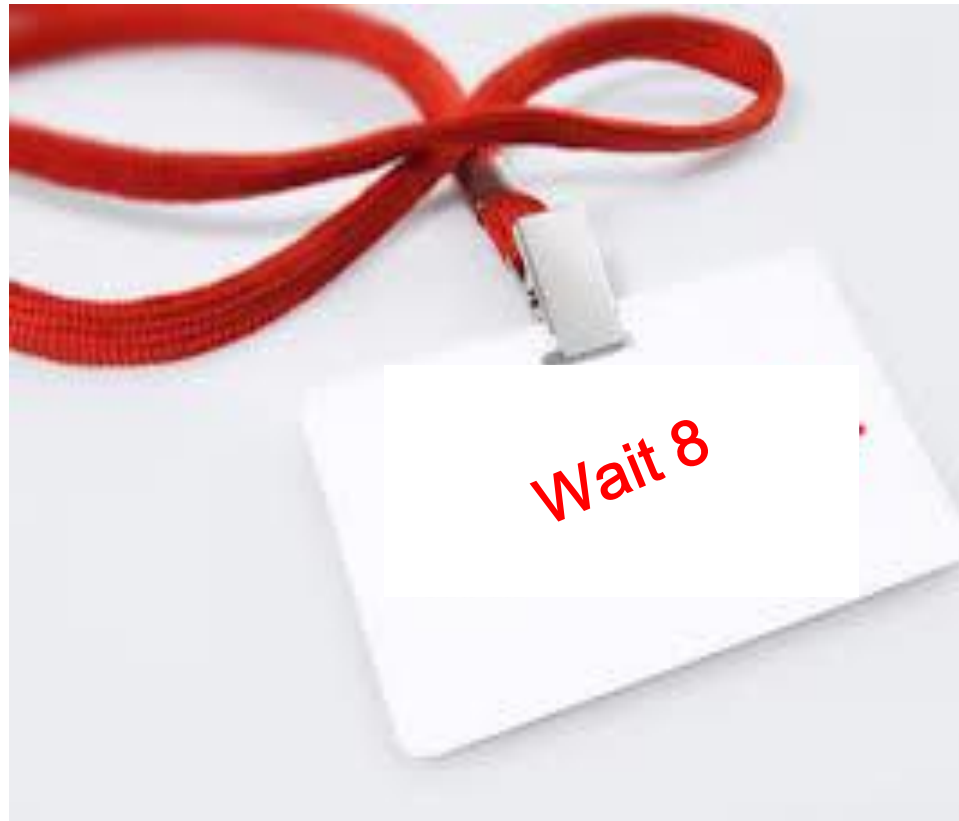
Breathe and  
ask one more  
question

## Imagery





# What is your MSR strategy?



# Empathic inquiry: FEELING



## Listening with Acceptance to the Parent's Feelings

### Resident Reflection

"I knew I was using the FAN when the mother told me that this was the first time she felt listened to"

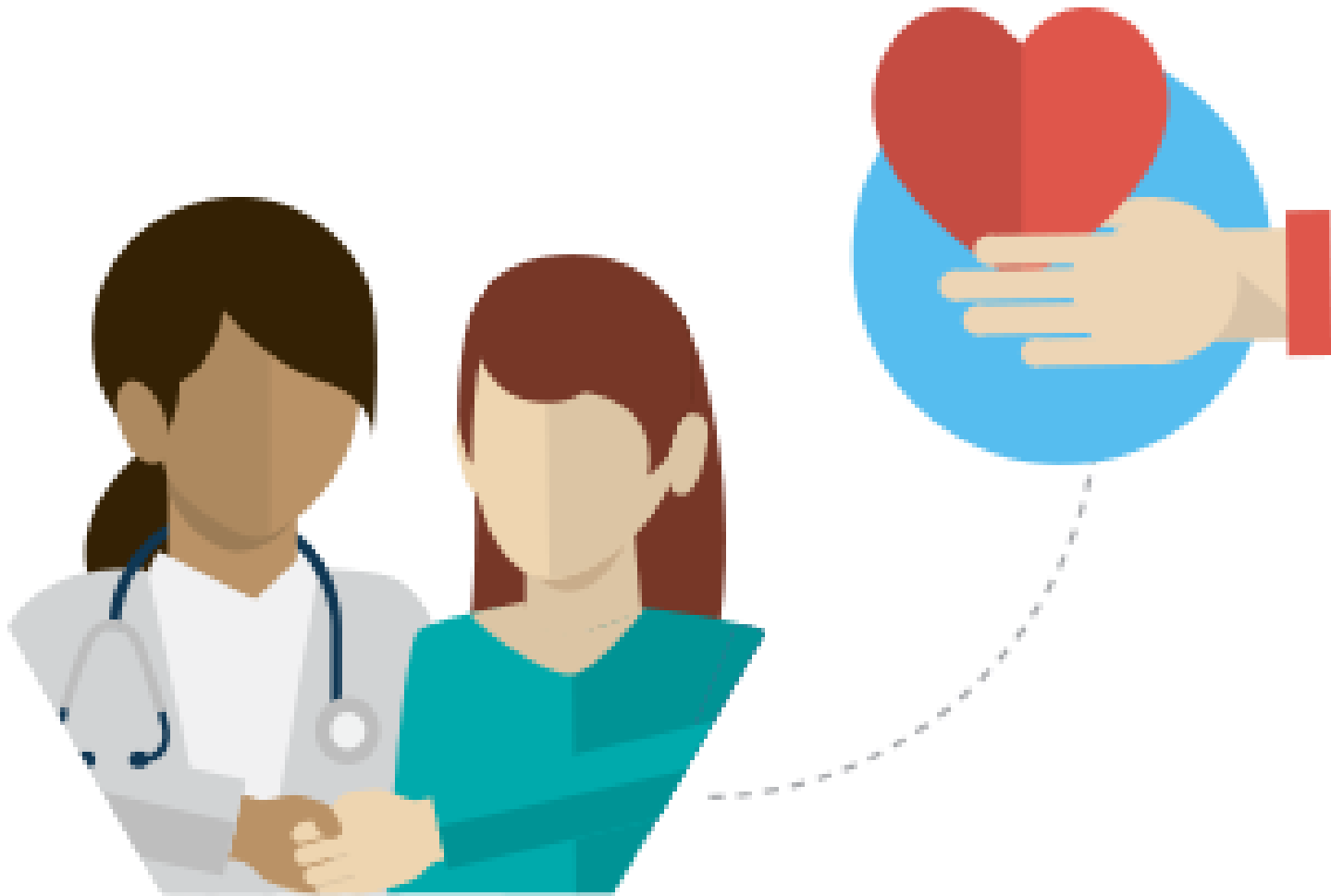
# Empathic inquiry: FEELING



# Empathic inquiry: FEELING

- 1) What do you think about the difference between empathy and sympathy?
- 2) When have you felt the pressure to silver-line something?
- 3) Considering empathy vs. sympathy, how do you think you might adjust your communication style in the future?

# Empathic inquiry: RESIDENT REFLECTIONS



# Collaborative exploration: THINKING



## Understanding Together

### Resident Reflection

“I use this on my obesity follow-up visits. I try to get a sense of what about obesity concerns the child or family: risk of diabetes, bullying, acanthosis...this helps me target my education to that particular issue rather than giving the same education to everyone. It feels like I am doing a better job”

# PAIRED LISTENING ACTIVITY



# Collaborative exploration: THINKING

- What did it feel like to seek help using each strategy?
- What did it feel like to give help using each strategy?





# Collaborative exploration: RESIDENT REFLECTIONS



# FAN: RESIDENT REFLECTIONS



# OUR STUDY

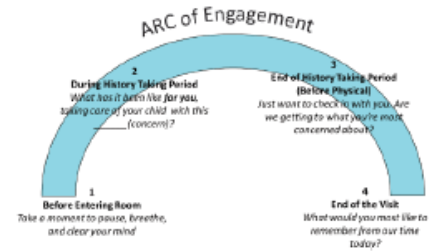
- 3-hour initial training
- Use of FAN/ARC on clinical encounter weekly w/reflection tool
- Monthly group vs. individual mentor sessions x 6 months
- Reflective supervision
- 1-hour booster training
- Initial results are promising!
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> study using standardized communication scenarios underway
- Sponsored by an APPD Special Projects grant

## FAN Reflection Tool

Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Visit date: \_\_\_\_\_

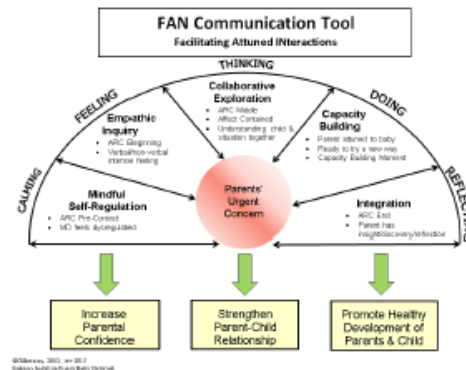
Clinical Scenario (include only patient's age and chief complaint):  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. Arc of Engagement: Looking at the ARC of Engagement graphic, which of the following pieces of the ARC were you able to use during this visit?



1. Take a moment to pause before entering	Yes	No
2. Ask parent "What has it been like for you taking care of your child with this _____ (concern)?"	Yes	No
3. Check in with parent ("Are we getting to what you're most concerned about?")	Yes	No
4. Ask parents at the end what was most important to them <i>If yes, what did they report?</i>	Yes	No
5. Match parent's cues to the core process needed in the moment	Yes	No

2. FAN Family Communication Tool Looking at the FAN graphic below, please mark with an x the two core processes that you used most during this visit.



# DISSEMINATION TO PROGRAMS

- 1) What communication skills training do you currently use in your program?
- 2) Would communication skills training using the FAN be helpful in your program?
- 3) What are some barriers to implementation?
- 4) If you are interested in FAN training for your program, what format would be most helpful (ie., train the trainer vs. web-based training)?
- 5) What would you most like to tell us about this training?

Questions?  
Michelle Barnes, [mbarnes@uic.edu](mailto:mbarnes@uic.edu)

Thank you  
for  
listening!

